

EVERETT EARL BLACK

THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Everett Earl Black

(1889 -)

Mr. Black, a prominent citizen and retired contractor, was born in Indiana and came to Hawaii in 1913 with his late wife, Ruth Aliene Emens Black, a teacher he had met in Victor, Colorado while working at the Portland Gold Mining Company. They had three children--Robert Emens, Everett Emens and Jane Anna Black.

Mr. Black started his long career at the age of nine, selling the Terre Haute Star's morning paper until he graduated from Rose Polytechnic Institute in 1911 with an engineering degree. He also sold Keuffel drawing instruments and handbooks to students at the institute.

From 1913 to 1918 he worked as an engineer for Oahu Sugar Company, U.S. Army Engineers, and the City and County of Honolulu. In 1918 he went to work for E.J. Lord, Limited. He later became a partner in the firm and when Lord sold him his interest in 1930, he changed the company's name to E.E. Black, Limited.

For three years during World War II, Mr. Black was Territorial Director of the Office of Civilian Defense. His many contributions to the community include twenty-five years as president of Queen's Hospital and his work as a director of Junior Achievement, First Hawaiian Bank, Honolulu Gas Company and Pacific Resources Incorporated.

Mr. Black relates his personal and employment history, highlights of his career, and some of his accomplishments.

Katherine B. Allen, Interviewer

© 1981 The Waiʻanae Foundation, Oral History Project
2051 Young Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

All rights reserved. This transcript, or any part thereof, may not be reproduced in any form without the permission of the Waiʻanae Foundation.

INTERVIEW WITH EVERETT EARL BLACK

At his Makiki home, 2020 Mott-Smith Drive, Honolulu 96822

September 17, 1981

B: Everett Earl Black

A: Katherine B. Allen, Interviewer

B: I've been a director of First Hawaiian Bank for some thirty-odd years and they had a luncheon for me yesterday and gave me a commendation and a very nice [koa] box.

A: I noticed that. That's a koa frame, isn't it?

B: Yes.

A: The commendation is in a koa frame.

B: And it's signed by all the other board members.

A: Yes, that's excellent. You became a director in 1948?

B: Forty-eight or forty-two [1942]. I've forgotten now. Forty-two, I think it was. I was thirty-eight years on it. [The plaque indicates he has been a director since March 12, 1948.]

A: Where was this that you were given this?

B: First Hawaiian Bank.

A: At the First Hawaiian Bank yesterday.

B: Yes. I'm emeritus now of several boards. I was president of the board of directors of Queen's [Hospital] for twenty-five years, and I was on Castle & Cooke's board for a number of years, and PKI--Pacific Resources [Incorporated] --and the Junior Achievement. I'm emeritus chairman of the board out there. (loud interference noise on tape)

A: Chairman of the board of Junior Achievement.

B: Yes. Emeritus.

A: Tell me a little bit about the Junior Achievement. What is that and what do they do?

B: Well, we have associations on each island now. We bring in high school students, preferably juniors and seniors, but they have some sophmores. They come in on their own time. We have a building out in Kaimuki that I got the contractors and the material houses to donate their services and material to, and then I furnished some money to fill in and built their building for them.

A: You built their building.

B: Yes. Well, they actually have my name on it. I don't know why, but then they do. They had about fifteen hundred students this last year, a great many from Punahou [School], Kaim [Kamehameha Schools], Iolani [School], all the high schools scattered throughout the island, but Punahou predominates for some reason or other.

They form companies directed by directors and officers, then they sell stock for a dollar a share, then they decide on a product they want to make and they make this product and then they sell it. They try to get the Christmas trade, you see, and then at the end of the year they close out and give a financial report. The stockholders--if they make money, why, they pay them a dividend; if they've lost money, why, they've lost it. But they learn the principles of business, as they're directed by volunteers from the business community.

At the lunch I was at yesterday with Johnny [John D.] Bellinger, the chairman of the First Hawaiian Bank, I said, "Johnny, we have four of our young people at least working out there all the time with that [Junior Achievement] and they get a great deal out of it because they learn how to handle people--handle these youngsters--helping them to help themselves; and we also get some good prospects, the best looking youngsters to hire." So it works both ways on the thing.

The thing that impresses me is that we are helping youngsters that already are showing signs of wanting to become something, because they're willing to spend their own time on this. This is in the evening. They spend a couple of hours in the evening each week during the school year to improve themselves and learn something about the principles of business, which isn't taught in the schools unless you take business education at the University [of Hawaii], and not all of them go to the university. Now they're trying to get it in the high schools. We've been promised we'll be allowed to promote it in high schools this fall, but I don't know because I'm out of the stream of things now. I don't know how they're doing or just how

they're getting started on that. But that's the way it's been run for a number of years and I've supported it very well and raised money for it. I can get more money out of some of the old-timers than some of the youngsters can.
(laughter)

- A: Good for you. I'm going to stop for a moment now, Mr. Black. (recorder turned off and on again) Mr. Black, I'd like to go back now to the early days. I understand that you were born in Vigo County, Indiana on March 21, 1889 and that you are the son of Young Fremont and Anna Marie Robinson Black.
- B: That's correct. I was born in a log cabin ten miles from Terre Haute on the old Darwin Road.
- A: On the old what road?
- B: Darwin. D-A-R-W-I-N.
- A: What did your father do?
- B: My father was originally a farmer, and then a carpenter, then a railroad car builder--freight cars first and then passenger cars later--for the Pennsylvania Railroad.
- A: And you lived there in Indiana . . .
- B: Until I graduated from Rose Polytechnic Institute at the age of twenty-two.
- A: Is that Rose-Hulman?
- B: Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, they call it now.
- A: Yes. Can you tell me anything about your mother that might be of interest?
- B: My mother was a deeply religious woman and she was trying to save the world. She was a White Ribbon girl that, you know . . . (laughs)
- A: White Ribbon girl?
- B: Yes.
- A: I don't understand what that means.
- B: You don't? Is that before your time? They were trying to eliminate liquor. The Carry Nation period. (laughs)
[Carry Amelia Moore Nation, 1846-1917, temperance leader.]

A: Oh, yes. I didn't know they were called that: White Ribbon.

B: Yeh. I brought my father and mother down here after awhile and bought them a place on Anapuni Street and my mother was quite active in Central Union Church, but they finally wanted to go back to Terre Haute to live in the home that they had worked for themselves and [near] their old friends, so they went back.

A: What do you recall about your childhood days in Indiana?

B: My what?

A: Your childhood days in Indiana. Does anything stand out in your mind?

B: Well, we were what they called poor honest people.

A: That's a nice thing to be.

B: And I started selling papers on the street when I was nine years old, and as I got older I had a paper route and I had a paper route all the way through engineering school till I was twenty-two. I used to get up and carry 235 newspapers every morning before I went to school, rain or shine, or snow or wind, or what have you. Indiana has some tough mornings. This was the morning paper of Terre Haute Star. And then I had the Keuffel Instrument Agency.

A: The what?

B: Keuffel. That's a German firm in Saint Louis, [Missouri] that made drawing instruments and had handbooks and levels and transits and things like that. I had that agency and I sold drawing instrument sets and handbooks to the students to make money.

A: Would you say the name of that once more? I didn't catch it.

B: Keuffel? It's K-E-U-F-F-E-L, I think.

A: Keuffel Agency. Thank you. How did you decide to become an engineer?

B: I don't know. I was influenced by some people on the street there. See, I shoveled snow, I shoveled coal, I cut grass. I did everything to make a dollar and there was Frank Cliff there that was an internal revenue man that thought I was a great kid. He advised me to take an

engineering course and I graduated actually in electrical engineering. I was offered a job--I don't know whether it was Westinghouse or General Electric now--at fourteen cents an hour, ten hours a day, six days a week. I was doing better than that with the rackets I had selling papers and instruments and stuff like that, so I wasn't interested.

So I had an uncle in Victor, Colorado on the old Portland gold mine [Portland Gold Mining Company] and I shook him down for a job, so I worked in the gold mine for a year after I graduated and got a little money ahead and I loved it so much I had to get out of it because I didn't have the education sufficient to give me a chance to go up, because I started as a mucker and then I ran a machine and a stoper, waterliner.

So I went to Salt Lake and got a job at the Garfield Smelter from an old Purdue [University] man.

A: Purdue?

B: Purdue. That's a big school in Indiana. He said, "If you graduated from Rose [Polytechnic Institute], you can have a job from me any time." It was a small school but very well thought of all through the West there. So I worked for him for a year and George Collins was working there, too, as a cub engineer. We got seventy-five dollars a month. George Collins married Tillie Neumann from Honolulu here who was related to the Hackfelds who ran the H. Hackfeld [and Company] which is now American Factors, and he had a job on the Waihole tunnel to develop water for the high cane fields among the runnels. He wired me that there was a job for \$150.00 if I wanted it, because I'd had experience in driving tunnels. So I went back to Victor, Colorado and got my gal and we came out here and arrived on the old Sonoma on the 10th of June, 1913.

A: Did you meet Mrs. Black, Ruth Aliene Emens, in Colorado?

B: In Victor, yes. Do you want to know why I'm called Johnny?

A: Yes. (laughs) I didn't know you were.

B: Yeh, everybody calls me Johnny. My partner that worked in the same stuff with me in the mine--I think we'd been in and had a beer, as I remember, and had come out and here was this good-looking girl and her mother, older woman, standing on the corner. I said, "I'll bet you a buck I can make mother and all." So I went up to her and I said, "Good evening." She had to introduce me to her mother and she called me Johnny Jones and the Johnny stuck. (laughter) A lot of people might enjoy knowing that is why they

call me Johnny.

A: That's a wonderful story. (laughter) She was born in Denver, Colorado, wasn't she--your wife?

B: Yes, and I have a picture that came just the day before Lowell Thomas died a week ago. She graduated in the same class with Lowell Thomas, who sent me the picture.

A: Oh, how interesting.

B: And Lowell Thomas and I have had a friendship over these years and Mother did, too, until she left. When he'd go through, why, he'd always stop and see us. I always saw him at the Bohemian Grove. I belong to the Bohemian Club in San Francisco and I went up to the grove each year until about three years ago. I haven't been on account of my leg since then.

A: I wanted to ask you about the Bohemian Club. What does that club involve itself with?

B: Well, it was started at first with artists of various kinds, who were in the theater and literature and arts. They had wonderful ideas but no money, so they had to pull in members that would pay dues that would support them. At this encampment we have up there each summer for a little over two weeks, each night there's a show by the best men talent in this country, and some of the outstanding like [Merv] Griffin-- that's where they got their start.

A: You mean Merv Griffin?

B: Yes. He put on a wonderful show there one night in respect for the people that had given him a chance when he was a young man. And each noon they have a musical concert. They have their own band, you see. These are all volunteer people and it was about an eighty-piece band, and then they have about an eighty-five-piece orchestra, so they give concerts each night, too, after the show. And then at noon they have an outstanding speaker, off the record. See, the (chuckles) news people don't like the club very much because they won't let them in. They don't want the stories carried out. It's off the record.

See, [Herbert Clark] Hoover was the prime mover there and he'd made the last speech of the last day, but we had the outstanding men in both finance and art and all sorts of things that talked each noon and that was off the record. And then there's an organ concert with that.

A: Was that Herbert Hoover?

B: Oh yes. How thoughtful they were, you know, as the old man slipped. I was there when it happened. I don't think you ought to write this down, but for your information anyway. Are you recording this?

A: Yes. It's all right.

B: He got wandering and got off of his subject to talking about fishing because he loved fishing. But you know, when he got that way, there was a quartet on the other side of the lake that started singing and his man took him away. That's the way they handled him. It was pathetic, but it was well done. [See p. 27 for R.M. Nixon story]

A: Going back a little bit now, what year was it that you met your wife?

B: Nineteen eleven [1911].

A: Nineteen eleven and that was in Colorado.

B: In Colorado.

A: Then you said you came over to Hawaii in 1913.

B: June the 19th, on the Sonoma.

A: And I understand that you were wearing this black bowler hat.

B: Yes, that's right.

A: And you were smoking cigars at the time.

B: That's right. I quit cigars about three years ago.

A: What was your reason for coming to Hawaii?

B: Well, George Collins and I met at Garfield Smelter and, as I repeat, he met Tillie Neumann who was a relative of the Hackfelds who were running the Oahu Sugar Company then and they offered him a job, and then he said there was a job here for me if I would come and that's the reason I came. [Geraldine Frances Neumann (Mrs. G.M.) Collins]

I wasn't here but a couple of months and they shut it down because a man by the name of Bishop had a subcontract to do that [Waiahole] job. He'd assembled an experienced crew and thought he was going to make a barrel of money out of it and they paid him off. I've forgotten now, some hundred thousand dollars or so to give it up, which was a

lot of money in those days. [Hubert K. Bishop]

Then I got a job with the U.S. [Army] Engineers in fortification and river and harbor work, and I had to be a civil engineer to get over a hundred dollars, so I passed the civil engineer examination and got raised to \$125.00. (laughter)

I worked there about three years and then I got a job with the City and County [of Honolulu] as an engineer, mostly project engineer on improvements that they were doing then, and became assistant city engineer at one time. It was during this time that E.J. Lord [limited] had a job of paving Lusitana Street and he had a superintendent named Donnelly that knew less about running a job than he should have and Mr. Lord was losing his shirt and he got excited. I said, "I can do the engineering work here for the city and county and run your job, too, better than it's being run now." And he looked at me and he said, "You're not fooling, huh?" I said, "I'm sure not fooling because I can run the job better than it's being run now." So he said, "Let's try it." [William H. Donnelly]

So I went to work with the men. I used to work with them, shoveling concrete and that sort of stuff because there was a lot of handwork in those days, and he was very much pleased because it changed it from a losing job to a profitable job, so he offered me a job working for him as an engineer assistant to him. So I went to work for him for three years.

A: And who was this?

B: E.J. Lord, contractor. At that time I had a discussion with him on the cofferdam on the other side that he was going to fix up and come over and show me how to do it, but he didn't show up. So I went in that night and told him that he could go over there and do it himself; I wasn't going to do it anymore.

And so, I think the very next day I got a job with the old contracting company, Hawaiian Contracting Company, and I was in charge of quite a lot of the work on the famous Doheny work tanks and piers and one thing and another down at Pearl Harbor--the scandal, you know, when they were paid so much, so many barrels for every unit or partial barrel. Well, I worked on that and made my first five thousand dollar bonus that paid for my home.

A: Wonderful.

B: Then Mr. Lord offered me a forty percent interest in the company if I'd come back after some three years and I went back to work with him, and not too long afterwards he wanted to get out, so that he took the money and I took

the plant and in 1930 it became E.E. Black, Limited.

A: What was your first project when the company became E.E. Black, Limited? Do you recall?

B: Well, I remember the first job with him was paving Iwilei [Road] and Alapai Street, but the first one for me I think maybe was Claudine Wharf over in Kahului, but I'm not sure.

A: Claudine Wharf?

B: Claudine Wharf in Kahului, the first wharf they built over there for the old Inter-Island [Navigation Company]. (recorder turned off and on again)

A: All right.

B: I know I went over there to do that job with them when it wasn't in very good shape, and I had met Harry and Frank Baldwin and they went out of their way to help me all through their lives. In fact, one time they wanted me to stay on Maui and do contract work, but I thought it was better in Honolulu. They did everything in the world to help me that they possibly could, but machine work--that's repairs and stuff like that. We got started off in good shape.

I had a German by the name of Pete [Peter] Erben running that work who was German-trained and a very good man and we got along very well together. And then I was able to get other work besides that one. I was in competent hands.

I got the same sort of reception from Mr. [George Norton] Wilcox down on Kauai when I went down there to build Nawiliwili Wharf. He used to come down each morning at six o'clock to see how I was doing and I remember one morning he said, "Black, it looks to me like you need another crane," and I said, "Mr. Wilcox, I do but I haven't got the money to rent it and I don't own another crane." He turned to [Edward H. W.] Broadbent, who was the superintendent of the mill up there, and he said, "You got a crane. Send it out there." That's the way the old-timers handled you in that day when you were trying to get by.

A: Yes. Um hm.

B: I received a tremendous amount of help from people all over this state, and it makes me feel very humble because I've been given credit for things that other people have come pretty near doing themselves.

- A: But you have done a great deal also. Lorrin Potter Thurston mentioned in his oral history that you were the one who made the renewal of canoeing possible.

END OF SIDE 1/1ST TAPE

At the time the tape ended we were talking about Lorrin P. Thurston mentioning your being instrumental in reviving the canoe races in Kona and that he was trying to organize them in 1930 and it was you who made it possible because you put up three thousand dollars. I wondered, do you remember that?

- B: Yeh, I remember that. I've done that. I've tried to be a decent citizen.
- A: And you were telling me about how you and your wife came here with only \$250.00 borrowed money.
- B: That's right.
- A: And would you continue that story? We didn't get that on tape.
- B: Well, that made it possible for us to make investments and gave security to my family and to myself.
- A: And you mentioned that you and your wife would save ten cents out of every dollar.
- B: Yeh, we saved ten cents out of every dollar even when I was making a hundred dollars a month. I used to walk from downtown to Center Street in Kaimuki. (microphone noises)
- A: That's a long walk from downtown to Center Street, isn't it?
- B: Yes, it is but when you have an object in mind. . . .
- A: What was the object at that time?
- B: Save money. (laughter)
- A: That's what I thought. And is that where you were living when you first came?
- B: Center Street, yeh.
- A: Returning to this canoe racing, were you a member of the Outrigger Canoe Club?

B: At one time, yes. I used to belong to all the clubs but I gave it up and I only belong to the. . . . Oh. See, I'm getting so that I don't think properly. Down here on Emma Street, the . . .

A: Pacific Club.

B: Pacific Club, yeh. That's the only club, then I belong to the club on the Mainland, too.

A: Bohemian Club.

B: Bohemian Club.

A: While you were a member of the Outrigger Canoe Club, what sort of activities did you participate in or what do you remember about the Outrigger Canoe Club days?

B: Well, I remember in the old location [between the Royal Hawaiian and Moana hotels] they used to have a lot of coral out there. Mr. Quinn, who was head of the U.S. [Army] Engineers at that time who was my boss--I took it upon myself to go out and blast them out for him because I knew how to handle powder under water. (chuckles) That was about the only thing they got out of me. (Kathy laughs)

A: What special method? Just what is so different about powder under water, not getting it wet?

B: See, we didn't have any electric fuses and you had to light the fuse and then go under water with it and fasten it around. It's burning all the time while you're there and you fasten it around the coral to knock it off, you see.

A: My word, you have to carry it down yourself?

B: Yeh, you dive down with it.

A: What keeps that flame from going out?

B: Well, you see, a fuse burns a foot a minute, so if you have a two-foot fuse you've got two minutes time before it will go off, so you can do a lot in a couple of minutes.

A: But if you're diving underwater with it . . .

B: Yeh, sure.

A: . . . it'll still keep on burning?

- B: It keeps on burning, sure, after you get it started inside, you see. It's enclosed so it burns the powder inside the fuse.
- A: Oh, I see. It's enclosed. Anything else about the Outrigger Canoe Club that you can recall?
- B: Well, we built a diving platform out there. We got the dredging company to drive some rails and then we put a platform on it.
- A: I mean, how about the other members and . . .
- B: Oh yes, the other members helped on the thing. There weren't many of them that would fool with powder because they were afraid of it.
- A: Did you participate in surfing and the other activities there?
- B: No, I never was a surfer. I swam pretty well but I never was a surfer. Both my children [Robert Emens and Everett Emens Black] would stand up on surfboards, but I never did. All three of them [including Jane Anna Black].
- A: There was a good deal of canoe racing at the Outrigger also, wasn't there?
- B: I think I was interested in it but I wasn't in it at all.
- A: But you didn't participate. I want to go back to the time that you were evidently on the Big Island. Did you ever live on the Island of Hawaii?
- B: No, but I've done a great deal of work over there.
- A: That's what I understood.
- B: Yeh.
- A: For instance, you had the contract to rebuild the road from Huehue Ranch to Puuwaawaa.
- B: Yeh.
- A: Do you recall that?
- B: Oh yes.
- A: And on to what is now the start of the Saddle Road.

B: That's right.

A: Was there anything in particular about that project that you remember?

B: It was hard pioneering work.

A: Is that when you used the first bulldozer in Hawaii?

B: No, but it was the first diesel shovel over there--brought in there. The first bulldozer I brought in was for the Big Island of Hawaii and I took it up to the [Hawaii Volcanoes National] Park and used it up there on a job I had.

A: Were these actually the first diesel shovel and the first bulldozer to be brought here?

B: I don't know whether it was the first shovel but it was the first bulldozer that came in.

A: And what year was that, do you remember?

B: No, I don't. [The bulldozer was invented in 1923.]

A: How about that diesel shovel? Do you recall the . . .

B: I don't remember the date of that.

A: But the first bulldozer was yours. (recorder turned off and on again)

B: The Navy wanted these tanks and piers [at Pearl Harbor] and they couldn't get an appropriation, so they paid the contractor off in oil from the Elk Hills, I think. That was the Doheny job. [See p. 8]

A: I see. Okay. Now let's go on. I know you've always been given contracts because of your low bid. I guess that is the way that . . .

B: Yes, it's competitive bidding.

A: I know you've had many, many projects but which one stands out in your mind? Which project that you worked on stands out in your mind?

B: I don't think any of them particularly.

A: None particularly?

B: No.

- A: Is there any one that was particularly a challenge or that you enjoyed working on?
- B: Well, there's been a lot of tough ones but then I don't know if any of them stand out particularly.
- A: You were the president of the Queen's Hospital for a number of years.
- B: Twenty-five.
- A: Twenty-five years. From when to when?
- B: From about 1950, I think, to 1975.
- A: What do you recall about those years as the president of Queen's Hospital?
- B: Well, they were spent in developing the hospital and developing the Queen Emma lands at Waikiki. They had twenty-five acres out there and I finally got those leased and got some money coming in, and then leased the quarry site also and some other lands they had and got it worked up to about two million dollars a year coming in to a tax-free hospital, which helped us to develop the hospital and not raise the rates too high. However, I'm a firm believer in keeping the rates high enough so they're in the black. I don't think anybody appreciates getting something for nothing. If they have to give it [services] to them, give it to them, but charge the people that can pay what it's worth. After I became president, I think there was one year we lost money and the rest of the years, and I notice now, they're in the black. That's the only way to run anything.
- A: That's right. After all, it's a business.
- B: Yeh, that's right. I got very good response from everybody there. See, the Women's Auxiliary, there's some 350 to 400 women involved with that and they put on this Festival of Trees each year. Then there's a number of them that work as volunteers in the hospital, giving their services which is better than we could possibly hire because they have higher I.Q's and are more experienced women. It does, I think, fill a need in many women's lives. Their children are raised or they're gone to college and it doesn't require as much time as they used to. They want something to do that's constructive and there's nothing more satisfying than doing something to help somebody else that's in trouble.

A: That's very true. Did you and your wife entertain a lot?

B: Not a great deal. Mother was interested in education and she entertained quite a lot of them [educators]. She was a regent for ten years at the University [of Hawaii] and then she was on the school board for ten years. She's a trained teacher and she was interested in that type of work. Of course she was in the AAUW [American Association of University Women], the Girl Scouts. I used to tell her if she couldn't run it, she would ruin it. (laughter) And she fooled with politics. She was one of the board that got statehood.

A: Oh yes, uh huh. She was in the Hawaii State Federation of Republican Women. Would that have been it?

B: Hmm?

A: You say she was on the board that got statehood for Hawaii.

B: Yeh. She went to Washington in connection with that.

A: I see. Were you politically active also in the Republican Party?

B: Only in the background. I used to raise money and try to help them out but they'll break your heart.

A: In what way?

B: Huh! Any way you want. It's a very trying job, working with politics, but I did it for years. I never ran for anything. I wouldn't run for anything. They tried to get me to run for mayor one year but I wouldn't do it. I haven't the temperament for a politician.

A: What kind of things did you do raising funds, and what other activities?

B: Well, they tried to get some work out of these people in the precincts, organize them and try to, but most of them would say, "Well, give us a thousand dollars for a luau and then we can get something done." A lot of money is spent to satisfy a politician's ego.

A: Your wife also was a member of the Outdoor Circle and . . .

B: Oh yes, she was one of the prime movers in that too.

A: Was she responsible for the fact that we have no signs on our highways?

- B: Yes, she worked very hard on that. Some new man would come in and put up a sign and then she'd call me and she'd go see him. I used to have painters then and she'd have me bring a painter over and paint out the sign. (Kathy laughs) I got moved into it too. She and Grace Wilder.
- A: I understand that you have three children: Robert Emens Black, Everett Emens Black and Jane Anna Black. Jane Anna is married now?
- B: No. She's single. She's never been married.
- A: Does she live here?
- B: No, in San Francisco.
- A: What does she do?
- B: I wish I knew, but she doesn't tell me. She says it's legitimate and I'm making money and you'd laugh at me if I told you. But I set up trusts for my children years ago and they have some money.
- A: Where did she go to school?
- B: She's a graduate of [Punahou School and] Radcliffe [College].
- A: Radcliffe?
- B: Yes.
- A: What was her interest at school?
- B: She started originally in medicine and then she changed to business, I think, and then she went to Katharine Gibbs for a year. I think that specializes in secretarial work, doesn't it?
- A: That's right. Correct. Well, the business and the secretarial go together.
- B: Yes, she's been secretary to Dr. MacLaughlin that was the head of the school system or the university system of California. She was his private secretary, doing the work at Homestake Mining Company for several years, but she's been on her own here the last- oh, I don't know--ten or fifteen years.
- A: And your son, Robert Emens, now is the . . .

B: He runs the company.

A: That's right, he runs your company--E.E. Black, Limited.

B: My son, Everett Emens Black, worked for the company for several years and is now retired.

A: Who are some of your best friends? Who are some of the people that you and your wife entertained?

B: Oh, I don't know. Of course her friends were in the educational field mostly and that didn't appeal to me too much. We didn't entertain a great deal, and now, what entertaining I do, I do outside at lunch or dinner. I had lunch yesterday at the First Hawaiian Bank with about twelve of my old friends on the board there that gave me that. . . . You saw that.

A: Commendation.

B: Yes. You see, I haven't been to a meeting since January. I can't see well enough to read. I can't read anything and I haven't guts enough to go to a meeting and take the money when I can't even read the articles, so that I hope by the end of the year I'll be able to go again. But I can go any time I want. It's gotten down now to me to--oh, I had dinner some time ago with Jim [James F.] Gary of PRI and his wife. See, I brought him in here.

I worked with the [Honolulu] Gas Company for many years. I was chairman of the board, president, and everything else. I brought Jim Gary in and then we developed it into PRI, Pacific Resources. I had dinner with him two or three months ago.

There's a group of us who go to brunch on Sunday about 9:30 a.m. We would eat and then we used to play cards. I still go to brunch with them but I can't play cards now because I can't see. I don't know whether you remember [Louis] Lyman Cowans and his wife, Helen; and Paul Tietz and Genevieve [Sicotte (Mrs. Eaton Henry) Magoon.

A: I'm sorry, would you go back and say those names again? I didn't get them.

B: Lyman Gowans. G-O-W-A N S. Paul Tietz. T-I-E-T-Z. And Genevieve Magoon. M-A-G-O-O-N.

A: I know of the Magoon family, but I don't know the others.

Lyman Gowans. That name isn't familiar to me. Do you have any anecdotes about people that you can recall?

B: Well, I can tell you what I live by.

A: All right. Good.

B: Nothing's so bad, it might be worse. (Kathy chuckles)
(recorder turned off and on again) Well, I live alone here now, you see.

A: When I asked about stories about your family, I mean when you and your wife and all of your children were all together. What kinds of things would you do together?

B: Well, we owned a home over in Lanikai right on the beach. We were the fourth house to build over there and if I were on the outside islands I used to break my neck to get home to spend the weekend with them because they loved to go over there on Saturdays and Sundays. I had a small Hawaiian horse for them. The lot next to us was vacant so they had a horse and camped and all that. They'd rather sleep in the tent than sleep in the house.

A: Naturally.

B: Then they had a twenty-foot flat-bottom boat with a twelve-horsepower motor, I think it was. Now they've got to have a hundred horsepower, but that was what we had. We'd go out and we'd catch fish. No big amount but we'd sometimes catch enough for a meal. And I used play volleyball with them and quoits and I'd go swimming with them and stuff like that. We had a nice family life with the children.

I used to go up to the Lanikai Country Club and play golf in the morning with some friends, and then they got so they wanted to play thirty-six holes, so I quit because it took too much of the day. I preferred to play eighteen holes and then come home and take a swim with the children and eat lunch and have a siesta or something like that. That was better for me because I used to work very hard.

A: I believe it.

B: Yeh, I did. Put in long hours and worked hard.

A: When did you retire?

B: Well, up to the first of the year I used to go to the office for three hours in the morning.

A: Every weekday?

B: Yes. See, I have a little business of my own and I get some checks once in awhile and have bills to pay and I prefer to do that if I can. And then I used to sign the checks for the hourly paid men. Some of them wanted to know if I was still there and that appealed to my ego, so I used to sign their checks each week. And then the Wall Street Journal and the business periodicals came over my desk and I was able to keep informed and up to date with what was going on. You see, now I've been blind for nine months. I don't know what in the world is going on, only through the radio, you see.

A: I understand.

B: So I'm hoping to get my sight back so I can start doing that again. It gives me a change. It makes a lot of difference to go down there at nine o'clock, then they come and get me at noon or else I come home or else go out to lunch, something like that. (recorder turned off and on again)

Well, I think the best job I had was in connection with the war [World War II].

A: Would you say that again? Oh, wait. Just a moment.

END OF SIDE 2/1ST TAPE

BEGINNING OF SIDE 1/2ND TAPE

B: I think the best job I did for the community probably was during the war when I was head of the OCD. That's the Office of Civilian Defense. [Ingram Macklin] Stainback was the governor and [J.] Garner Anthony was the attorney general. I'd turned it down three times and finally the Navy got after me and [Secretary of the Navy James V.] Forrestal was here and he said, "Johnny, you've got to take that job." So I took George Collins over. I wouldn't take it, only as a volunteer. I wouldn't let them pay me and George couldn't give his services, so I paid him for a half a day each day. He was a very good detail man and I think we did a very good job in connection with the Office of Civilian Defense for the three years that I was in charge of it. Some people thought it was so good that they said if I'd give twenty thousand dollars to the Democratic Party I could become governor, but I didn't want that either.

I think I did a very commendable job at the Queen's Hospital. They were terribly in debt when I went in there but we got that straightened out and developed all the lands that Queen Emma had given them out at Waikiki and other places and got some income from them. And the last

I knew we had two million dollars a year that's tax-free income, which means a great deal to any institution.

A: Right.

B: I used to do work for both the gas company and Hawaiian Pine [Pineapple Company] and the gas company were such poor neighbors that Hawaiian Pine was about to sue them. They had about a foot of soot on their roof and they were getting some of it in their cans and they were having a hard time. Henry White came to me and he said, "Johnny, we've got to do something with this outfit" and I said, "Why don't you buy it?" He said, "Well, you can't buy it." I said, "You can buy anything. Some guys even sell their wives." "Well," he said, "see what you can do."

So I went and saw Al [Alfred Lowrey] Castle, who was quite a stockholder at that time, and he controlled quite a lot of the other stock of stockholders on account of being a lawyer and he was very glad to get rid of it. So we bought it and distributed the stock around and I took more than I wanted, but Cyril [Francis] Damon insisted on me taking it. He was on the board then. And I went to Henry White and I said, "You've got to get somebody to run it because the guy they've got running it now can't run anything" and he said, "Well, you are." Well, I had a contracting company but I said, "All right, I'll do what I can."

So we had a meeting and they were losing money and it came up to paying a dividend, a twenty-cent dividend, and I said, "No. No dividend. If you don't earn it, you don't pay it. I'll borrow money to pay a dividend if you earn it." Well, you know, that kind of shook them up but I apparently have the happy faculty of getting people to respond pretty well to me, who were working with and for me, and so I handled it just like one of my own jobs until we could get somebody in to run it. And that developed from one to the other on the thing until we got Jim Gary now.

We had a parade. We got a man to straighten out the plant and then we got a man for the public relations and then we got Jim Gary to run it for money and he's done a very good job. And then we got it into security so that we could develop Pacific Resources from that and that's how Pacific Resources was born.

I was a director at Castle & Cooke [Incorporated] for quite awhile but I was just a director. I'm still a director emeritus of the First Hawaiian Bank, so that I've had quite a little contact with the business community of the city and the state, and have been on speaking terms with most of the leaders.

A: I imagine so, yes. Is there anybody who particularly stands out in your memory as an outstanding person?

B: An out what?

A: As an outstanding person. Any of these leaders that stands out in your mind for any reason. For instance, what was your impression of Governor Stainback?

B: Well, to start with I'm a Republican. Is that an answer enough?

A: (laughs) I think so. What was your experience during World War II? Where were you and your family on December 7, 1941?

B: I was right out by Pearl Harbor when it broke loose. My family, my youngest son and my wife, were in our house at Ferdinand [Street] and the other two children were off at their colleges. I was doing a great deal of work for Pearl Harbor, the Superintendent of Public Works out there, and so I helped bury those thirty-five hundred men that day.

And then we worked all night in the shop and changed pumps to gasoline and diesel, as many as we could, to get them out there to help save the ships that were sinking. Most of those were Japanese [employees] and the mechanics wouldn't take pay for their service; they offered their service for nothing that night.

A: Were you actually right there at Pearl Harbor at the time of the initial attack?

B: Well, just this side of it. I was building quarters for Marines that were coming in and the Japanese flew right over us to get at the airfield. I thought it was a rough exercise at first until they started shooting. And then, of course, the telephones jammed; couldn't telephone. And the street was like a race track because people that were out for the night, you see, were trying to get back to the ships. Admiral [Husband E. Kimmel] said, "You can't start a war without me being there," but they did.

It was very interesting to see the reaction of people that we trained for that kind of stuff. Some of the Annapolis [Naval Academy] graduates were terribly shaken, where others were right at it. Fortunately, the Superintendent of Public Works was one of those guys that was right at it, so there was no trouble.

We had to get a crew out. See, they hit the fire station at Hickam [Air Force Base] the first thing. They put it out of commission, so we had to get crews to fix up the

broken pipes and stuff like that. I thought they [the Japanese] were going to land because they didn't knock out the power plants or the gas company. You see this down here, if they knock out the electric plants you couldn't live in it in two weeks because you couldn't pump the sewage out.

A: That never occurred to me.

B: You'd stew in your own juice. So I thought sure they were going to land, but they didn't. They could have, I think, without much trouble. Sure a consternation. But Roosevelt got his wish. He said, "They attacked us, didn't they?" He knew they were coming. They were hectic days for awhile but we all got through them. We had a hard time convincing the military not to send the Japanese to Molokai, because most of the working force was Oriental.

A: Do you remember General Herron? Charles Herron.

B: I don't think so.

A: Did you ever have anything to do, in your work at Pearl Harbor, with General [Walter D.] Short?

B: I knew of him but I didn't work close with him. I apparently did a fine job there. Down at the office there's commendations from the top flight of the Navy for the work we did down there. We tried to keep the production up because we knew that kind of work wasn't going to last forever, and I did squeeze out enough people to help the Hawaiian Electric [Company] and some of the others do some work that they needed.

A: I notice that you have a Black Construction Corporation in Guam.

B: Yeh.

A: And also a Black Micro . . .

B: Micronesia.

A: Black Micronesia Corporation in the Trust Territory.

B: Bob [his son] formed that. That's been formed since I let go of it when I was seventy-five [in 1964].

A: I see.

B: That's his stuff.

- A: And what is the Kawaiahao Development Corporation?
- B: Well, it's a corporation that had some land here but I think all the land has been disposed of now, so it's dormant.
- A: Of course these are listed in your son's biodata.
- B: Yeh.
- A: Is most of the work that the Black Construction Company does on Guam military work?
- B: Yeh, a great deal of it. (recorder turned off and on again)
- A: When you were sworn in as the new Territorial Director of Civilian Defense, evidently it was noted that you took your oath in shirt sleeves. Do you remember that?
- B: Yeh. Well, that's the way I traveled.
- A: Always.
- B: If they didn't like it, they could lump it. (Kathy laughs) Why? Does that make any difference?
- A: Oh, of course not. This was in 1942 and evidently it was noticed enough for them to have it in the paper.
- B: Yeh. Yeh, Stainback and I got along all right on that. (Garner Anthony and General [Robert C.] Richardson here that. . . . (chuckles) I had a nice experience that time I went back to Washington with the budget and I went to the Finance Committee of the Senate. Of course they kind of fooled around with me and kidded me and one thing and another and I said, "I'll tell you something. If there's any money left from this budget, I'm going to send it back." Well, they'd never heard of anything like that--nobody ever sent anything back--but I had a million and a half dollars left and I sent it back.
- And I also made it possible for the starting of Wahiawa Hospital. My friend, Jack [John] Longley, was very much interested in that and I was able to sell him surplus supplies of all sorts of hospital stuff that we had on hand for practically nothing to get him started out there as the Wahiawa Hospital. So that was a Boy Scout deed for him and it means something. We've got a nice hospital out there now.
- A: Very nice. That was Jack Longley?

B: Yeh. He was the head of the pineapple fields out there. See, we used to get stuff from the Navy. If they had surplus, they'd give it to us and then we tried to help other people that really needed it.

It was a very interesting job. I had a lot of fun and, being a volunteer, I called on Walter [Francis] Dillingham and Kid 'Henry Alexander' Walker, any of them, to do what I wanted them to do and they did it because I was a volunteer. If I had been a paid executive, I could have gotten nowhere.

A: Who was the Walker you mentioned?

B: Kid Walker. He used to run American Factors.

A: K-I-T? K-I-D?

B: I always called him Kid Walker. K-I-D.

A: What was his first name?

B: I don't know. (Kathy laughs) Well, I was in charge of bringing in all the supplies. I shorted the civilian population of good steaks and gave them all to the service people because those people leaving here, it would be the last steak they ever had and they'd probably come back in a box. And I tried to get them to cut the liquor in two--dilute it, you see--but I couldn't get that done. The boys were going blind from homemade stuff and all that sort of stuff. Terrible. Swipes. Some good okolehao and there's some bad okolehao.

A: I wonder if you're aware that you have lived during the presidency of seventeen presidents. Seventeen.

B: Presidents?

A: Uh huh.

B: Um hm.

A: Which of them do you remember the most and the best?

B: (laughs) Well, I don't know. I suppose [Franklin Delano] Roosevelt I remember the best because he screwed up the country.

A: This is Franklin D. Roosevelt.

B: Yeh. He instigated stuff that's causing us trouble now. He and his Democrat friends.

A: You mean all the new programs he initiated?

B: Yeh.

A: Social security programs.

B: Yeh. He got quite lousy on that sort of stuff, you see, and he turned the labor leaders. . . . See, the labor unions have done a wonderful job in helping the ordinary working man because in many cases he was imposed upon by administrators all over the country, but after they do that and then they get into politics and they get running a pension better than what you can get and you pay for it, that's wrong I think. Don't you? Or do you?

A: Um hm.

B: Because that government down there now could be run with ten percent less people right now and you'd never miss them.

A: Right. Right.

B: But why should they be overpaid and better taken care of after they retire? Ridiculous. There're many other things. It made bums out of a lot of people, you know, because if you haven't got many skills it's a toss up between what you can get for not doing anything and what you can earn working. So you make a bum out of him because [he figures] "What the hell, I'm not going to work." You offer him a job and he won't take it. They have eight children and it's costing eight and nine hundred dollars a month, and you're going to see the day in your life when they're going to have the majority vote because they're breeding them and you hooles don't. The present day young woman doesn't want to have children, not more than one or two, and most of them don't want to have children and they're wise enough now so they don't have to have them unless they want them.

A: Um hm.

B: No, that was the beginning of the United States going to hell.

A: Which one of the presidents do you think did the most and the best for the country?

B: You've got one now that's trying to.

A: Yes, he certainly is. [President Ronald Reagan]

- B: First indication of a guy with guts. All the rest of them have been compromisers. See, politics is compromising. Of course life is compromise; nobody can get his own way all the time, but compromise how far?
- A: Is there anything else that you can think of that you'd like to get on the record?
- B: Huh! I don't care if it's on record or not. (laughter) One generation is gone, you know.
- A: Well, you've had such a full life and you've been such a . . .
- B: I've had a nice life, too; I've had a hard, interesting life and I've enjoyed it thoroughly but I've lost this whole year practically, but I guess I'm paying for my sins. I'm going back next month for my seventieth homecoming and I'm going to take Charlie [Charles K.L.] Davis and two girls and put on a show. I'm going to take this boy [his male nurse, Wade] and another boy from the company to take care of me, to get me back there safely and get me home. And I have a sister in Cedar Rapids, Iowa that is a year and a half younger than I am and she's a Christian Scientist and she must be in bad shape because she says, "I'm not as well as I'd like to be." She has trouble with her knees going up steps, so I'm going back to see her.
- A: Very good. Your homecoming will be to that institute?
- B: Rose-Hulman, yes. Rose-Hulman Institute.
- A: Seventieth.
- B: Seventieth, yeh.
- A: Have you ever been to other homecomings?
- B: Oh yes. I've taken Hawaiian entertainment back twice.
- A: What is your sister's name?
- B: Cecil B. Phillips.
- A: Phillips with one "l"?
- B: No, two "l's."
- A: Initial "B."
- B: "B" stands for Black. She likes the "B" in her name.

END OF SIDE 1/2ND TAPE

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcribed and edited by Katherine B. Allen

- p. 7 Mr. Black wished to add this story: "Another demonstration of the Bohemian Club campmates' attitude toward one another was when Richard M. Nixon was removed from office as President. [President Nixon resigned on August 8, 1974 under pressure.] His campmates took food, liquor and servants down to San Clemente to have brunch with him. I thought this was remarkable, since most of those men didn't approve of what he had done."

The Waiahole Tunnel project, as described in the Hawaiian Annual of 1916 on page 174, was an "engineering project of tunneling the Koolau mountain range to convey the Waiahole waters of Waikane and its vicinity to the upper cane lands of the Oahu Plantation in the Ewa district." The contracting engineer in charge of the project was Jorgen Jorgensen.

- p. 8 Regarding the Edward Laurence Doheny project at Pearl Harbor, a file card in the Hawaii State Archives notes: "Lawyers arrive [in August 1929] on yacht Casiana to investigate oil tanks at Pearl Harbor erected by oil magnate; may be part of material re trial of Albert Fall, now charged with receiving \$100,000 bribe from Doheny," head of Pan-American Petroleum. Aboard the yacht was Frank J. Hogan of Washington, D.C., "chief counsel to the petroleum magnate."

Honolulu Advertiser, August 11, 1929 on page 1, states: "Doheny has an even dozen of millions tied up in two nests of storage tanks at Pearl Harbor and would very much like to get them out. In only one way can he do that--by act of Congress.

"The Pan-American Petroleum Company built the Navy a fueling plant at Pearl Harbor costing in round numbers almost exactly \$12,000,000 and accepted as exchange payment certain leases on oil lands which the Supreme Court has set aside. The Navy department exceeded its authority in entering into such an agreement, the court said, at the same time holding that only Congress had power to

make an appropriation to cover Pan-American expenditures made here."

"As everybody now knows, the court also cancelled the leases. In consequence, Mr. Doheny is now 12,000,000 out of pocket plus 1,700,000 interest. No legal action looking to his reimbursement is possible. It is purely a matter for Congress to decide whether the United States government, in the judgment of Congress, wishes to confiscate that much property."

"The property consists of two units, the first holding 1,500,000 barrels and the second 2,700,000 of fuel oil . . ."

"There are thirty 50,000 barrel tanks in the first unit and twenty-five 80,000 barrel tanks in the second unit. Pan-American filled the first unit to capacity. Then came litigation and the second was never filled."

Subject Index

- 1 First Hawaiian Bank commendation, 1981
E.E. Black's business affiliations
Queen's Hospital
Castle & Cooke Incorporated
Pacific Resources Incorporated
Junior Achievement
- 2 Description of Junior Achievement activities
Punahou, Kamehameha and Iolani schools
John D. Bellinger; First Hawaiian Bank
University of Hawaii
- 3 E.E. Black's background; family history
Young Fremont and Anna Marie Robinson Black
Pennsylvania Railroad
Rose Polytechnic Institute;
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Carry Nation and the White Ribbon Girls
- 4 Family history; the Blacks in Hawaii
Young Fremont and Anna Marie Robinson Black
Central Union Church
E.E. Black's first employment
Terre Haute Star
Keuffel Instrument Agency
E.E. Black's decision to be an engineer
Frank Clift, E.E. Black's mentor

- 5 E.E. Black's employment history
Westinghouse and General Electric companies
Portland Gold Mining Company
Garfield Smelter
Purdue University
Rose Polytechnic Institute
George Miles Collins, engineer
Geraldine Frances Neumann (Mrs. G.M.) Collins
The Henry Hackfeld family
H. Hackfeld and Company
American Factors: AMFAC Incorporated
Sonoma brings the Blacks to Hawaii, 1913
Ruth Aliene Emens (Mrs. E.E.) Black
Anecdote: why E.E. Black is called Johnny
- 6 Ruth Aliene Emens (Mrs. E.E.) Black
Lowell Thomas, newsman
Bohemian Club history
Merv Griffin, entertainer
Herbert Clark Hoover, 31st President
- 7 Historic anecdote: Herbert Clark Hoover
E.E. Black family history; Hubert K. Bishop
George Miles Collins; Garfield Smelter
Geraldine Frances Neumann (Mrs. G.M.) Collins
The Hackfelds; Oahu Sugar Company

- 7 E.E. Black's employment history
- 8 U.S. Army Engineers employment
City and County of Honolulu employment
E.J. Lord, Limited
Hawaiian Contracting Company
Edward L. Doheny; Pearl Harbor project
- 9 E.J. Lord, Limited becomes E.E. Black, Limited
The Black company's first job
Harry and Frank Baldwin
Peter Erben
George Norton Wilcox
Edward H.W. Broadbent
- 10 Lorrin Potter Thurston
Revival of canoe racing, Kailua-Kona, 1930
E.E. Black's contribution to canoe racing
The E.E. Black's financial status, 1913
Outrigger Canoe Club
- 11 E.E. Black's club affiliations
Pacific Club; Bohemian Club
Outrigger Canoe Club; Richard Quinn
Anecdote: blasting coral at Waikiki Beach
- 12 Outrigger Canoe Club's diving platform
Robert Emens and Everett Emens Black
Jane Anna Black

- 12 Huehue Ranch
- 13 Hawaii's first diesel shovel and bulldozer
- 14 Queen's Hospital financial history
Queen's Hospital Women's Auxiliary
Festival of Trees
Queen Emma lands
- 15 Ruth E. Black's interests; activities
University of Hawaii
American Association of University Women
Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
Hawaii State Federation of Republican Women
E.E. Black's political activities
Outdoor Circle
- 16 Grace B. (Mrs. Charles) Wilder
Robert Emens and Everett Emens Black
Jane Anna Black's education; employment
Homestake Mining Company
- 17 Robert E. and Everett E. Black's employment
E.E. Black's social activities
First Hawaiian Bank
James F. Gary; Pacific Resources Incorporated
Mr. and Mrs. Louis Lyman Gowans
Paul Tietz
Genevieve Sicotte (Mrs. Eaton H.) Magoon

- 18 The Black family's way of life
Lanikai Country Club
E.E. Black's later business activities
- 19 Wall Street Journal
Office of Civilian Defense
Governor Ingram Macklin Stainback
Attorney General J. Garner Anthony
Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal
George Collins
Queen's Hospital; Queen Emma
- 20 Hawaiian Pineapple Company
Henry Arthur White
Honolulu Gas Company history
Alfred Lowrey Castle
Cyril Francis Damon
James F. Gary; Pacific Resources Incorporated
Castle & Cooke Incorporated
First Hawaiian Bank
- 21 Governor Ingram Macklin Stainback
World War II experiences
Admiral Husband E. Kimmel
Annapolis Naval Academy
Hickam Air Force Base
- 22 Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 32nd President

- 22 General Charles D. Herron
General Walter D. Short
Hawaiian Electric Company
Black Construction Corporation, Guam
Black Micronesia Corporation
Robert Emens Black
- 23 Kawaiahao Development Corporation
Black Construction Company, Guam
Governor Ingram Macklin Stainback
J. Garner Anthony
General Robert C. Richardson, Jr.
Anecdote; Office of Civilian Defense budget
John Longley
Story of the Wahiawa Hospital
- 24 Walter Francis Dillingham
Henry Alexander Walker; American Factors
E.E. Black's civilian defense activities
Franklin Delano Roosevelt
- 25 E.E. Black's opinion of F.D.R.'s New Deal
E.E. Black's opinion of President Ronald Reagan
- 26 E.E. Black's 70th Homecoming, 1981
Charles K.L. Davis
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Cecil Black Phillips

THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

In May 1971, the Watumull Foundation initiated an Oral History Project.

The project was formally begun on June 24, 1971 when Katherine B. Allen was selected to interview kamaainas and longtime residents of Hawaii in order to preserve their experiences and knowledge. In July, Lynda Mair joined the staff as an interviewer.

During the next seventeen months, eighty-eight persons were interviewed. Most of these taped oral histories were transcribed by November 30, 1972.

Then the project was suspended indefinitely due to the retirement of the foundation's chairman, Ellen Jensen Watumull.

In February 1979, the project was reactivated and Miss Allen was recalled as director and editor.

Three sets of the final transcripts, typed on acid-free Permalife Bond paper, have been deposited respectively in the Archives of Hawaii, the Hamilton Library at the University of Hawaii, and the Cooke Library at Punahou School.